

Date: June 18, 2003

To: RM Community

From: Susan Frey, Departmental Records Officer

Subject: RM Numbered Memo 2003-13: Transmittal of NARA Documents for Review/Comment

Please see the memo from NARA below that transmits 2 new papers regarding agency assurances and records management inspections and studies. NARA is requesting review and comment on these papers. If you wish to provide comments, please send them to Jay Blewett ([jay.blewett@hq.doe.gov](mailto:jay.blewett@hq.doe.gov)) by Wednesday, July 9, 2003 for consolidation into a Departmental response to NARA.

Please forward this to appropriate people and consolidate all comments before sending in your response to this Office. Headquarters comments should be sent to Jannie Kindred to consolidate. Thank you for your participation. If you have questions, please contact me on 301-903-3666 or Jay Blewett on 301-903-9608.

-----Original Message-----

**From:** RM Communications [mailto:RM.Communications@nara.gov]

**Sent:** Monday, June 16, 2003 8:04 AM

**To:** Evelin, Sharon; Frey, Susan

**Subject:** NWM 19.2003 RMOMEMO to distribute assurance and inspection drafts

June 13, 2003

NWM 19.2003

**MEMORANDUM TO AGENCY RECORDS OFFICERS:** RMOMEMO to distribute assurance and inspection drafts

NARA's Strategic Goal 1 states that: "Essential evidence will be created, identified, appropriately scheduled, and managed for as long as needed." In support of this strategic goal, NARA began a series of three initiatives to:

- 1) document the current recordkeeping and records use environment in the Federal Government;
- 2) use that information to analyze NARA's records management policies; and
- 3) redesign, if necessary, the scheduling, appraisal, and accessioning process.

In July 2002, NARA published and sought comments on a document entitled "National Archives and Records Administration Proposal for A Redesign of Federal Records Management." This document can be reviewed at [http://www.archives.gov/records\\_management/initiatives/rm\\_redesign.html](http://www.archives.gov/records_management/initiatives/rm_redesign.html). This initial redesign proposal serves as the basis for NARA's Records Management Initiatives (RMI).

In support of the RMI, NARA distributed and sought comments on proposals for improving and expanding the General Records Schedules (GRS) and for providing flexible scheduling alternatives for temporary records series (January 2003). NARA also distributed and sought comments on its draft Appraisal Policy (March 2003).

Now, NARA distributes and seeks comments on two new RMI papers regarding agency assurances, and records management inspections and studies. These draft papers are enclosed with this transmittal.

The Agency Assurances draft paper discusses an approach for obtaining agency assurances to protect the rights and interests of citizens and to ensure government accountability in the scheduling of

temporary records. The goal of the proposed agency assurance process is to provide a means for agencies to demonstrate that in proposing retention periods for their records they have taken reasonable measures to identify and protect legal rights and document accountability for the actions of their agencies. The paper identifies the agency officials that should be responsible for making assurances to NARA regarding temporary retention periods; a description of what these officials are assuring NARA; and a description of how the assurance will be made to NARA.

The Inspections and Studies draft paper outlines how NARA will use these records management tools established in statute to ensure that:

- (1) Federal agencies economically and effectively create and manage their records to meet their agencies' business needs;
- (2) Records, regardless of format, are kept long enough to protect rights, assure accountability, and document the national experience; and
- (3) Records, regardless of format, are destroyed when they are no longer needed and it is practical to do so.

We encourage you to submit your comments on these drafts by email to [RM.Communications@nara.gov](mailto:RM.Communications@nara.gov) by Friday, July 11, 2003. Your feedback helps us understand how NARA's Records Management Initiatives meet the needs of various stakeholders in the Federal records management process.

If you have not registered for the Thursday, June 19 BRIDG meeting at the National Archives Building where these two papers will be discussed, please send your name, agency affiliation, and phone number by return email before COB Monday, June 16.

**HOWARD P. LOWELL**

Acting Director

Modern Records Programs